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ABSTRACT

Guidelines and procedures which Texas Agricultural Extension Service personnel may use in working with local people in planning and carrying out county programs are provided in this handbook. The program building process is based on the philosophy that people have both the desire and ability to plan and carry out educational programs. The handbook Introduction provides discussions of the purpose of the handbook, definition of terms, a chart showing the program building process, and the scope of county programs. Following sections present discussions of The County Program Building Organization; The Process of Planning the County Program; The Written County Program; Leadership of the County Program Building Organization in Carrying Out the County Program; and the County Extension Agent's Annual Plan of Work. An appendix presents Standing Rules for County Program Building Committees. (DB)

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D-690

For the Texas Agricultural Extension Service

Program Building Handbook

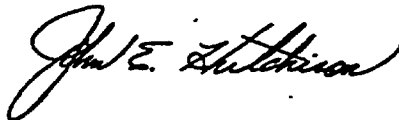
TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY
TEXAS AGRICULTURAL EXTENSION SERVICE
J. E. Hutchison, Director, College Station, Texas

Foreword

The program building process, as described in this handbook, provides the Cooperative Extension Service the most dynamic approach to voluntary educational programs of any technique since Dr. Seaman A. Knapp introduced the demonstration method of teaching. Program building not only involves local leaders but also enlarges the leadership capabilities of those who are involved. It draws on the creativity of local people as they work together to design programs which apply the findings of research from both the physical and social sciences in bringing about the solution of significant problems and attainment of objectives such as increasing net incomes, improving communities, and achieving higher levels of family living. The program building process provides a framework through which people can objectively identify potentials and problems. Because it relates so directly to individual wants and needs, the process is a strong motivational experience and elicits commitment to the adopted plan of action.

This handbook establishes guidelines and procedures by which Extension personnel may discharge their educational responsibilities in the development of county programs. It is based on the experience, research and study of the total Extension staff during the past 20 years. This experience has proved conclusively that the most effective county programs are those which have been developed through the program building process.

Extension personnel will find this handbook a useful and dependable reference and guide.



Director
Texas Agricultural Extension Service

PROGRAM BUILDING HANDBOOK

For the Texas Agricultural Extension Service

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The original manuscript was authored by Bonnie Cox, Extension Organization Specialist, now retired; Larry L. Burleson, former Extension Organization Specialist; Claudia G. Williams, former Extension Program Specialist; and O. B. Clifton, Extension Program Specialist.

Introduction

This publication replaces all previous editions of program building handbooks released by the Texas Agricultural Extension Service. The first handbook was produced as mimeographed material in 1949. B-223 *Building The County Program* was published in 1954. *County Program Building Handbook for Texas Agricultural Extension Workers* was published in 1956. This was revised in 1958 and served as the official program building handbook until 1963.

D-690 *Program Building Handbook for the Texas Agricultural Extension Service* was published in March 1965, culminating two years of field testing and revision of earlier drafts. It served as the official guide and reference for program building work in Texas until June 1971 when it was again revised to incorporate additional information obtained from research and experience.

Purpose of Handbook

This handbook serves as a guide for the personnel of the Texas Agricultural Extension Service, working with local people in planning and carrying out county programs. It will also serve to

- Develop a better understanding of the program building process
- Define responsibilities of Extension personnel
- Illustrate relationships of local organizations, agencies and groups to the county program building committee and to the county program
- Suggest a procedure for utilizing all available resources for work on important problems
- Apply previous experience and research in program development to future Extension work
- Help in training personnel, particularly new employees of the Texas Agricultural Extension Service.

The program building process is based on the philosophy that people have both the desire and the ability to plan and carry out educational programs that enable them to provide for themselves higher levels of living and enrichment of their lives. The degree to which this is accomplished depends on their having an opportunity to apply their knowledge, experience and imagination to the solution of mutual problems. This handbook suggests a sound and practical approach for providing such an opportunity.

Definition of Terms

Program building is a continuous process by which representative county leaders, working with county Extension agents, other local agencies and resource persons, study the county situation, identify major problems and opportunities, establish objectives and plan and carry out a program of education and action designed to help the people reach their objectives.

The *county program building committee*, hereafter sometimes referred to as *the committee*, is an organized group of voluntary leaders broadly representative of the social and economic structure of a county. This committee serves as a channel for bringing problems of the people to the attention of local groups and agencies concerned and for taking needed information to the people. Representation on the committee should be both geographical and organizational to insure active participation from all areas of interest over the county. The number of members will vary from county to county, but the membership should be broad enough to represent the major segments of the population and the interests of the people.

The *executive committee* is a small body composed of the officers and certain designated members of the organization. Membership of the executive committee, its authority and method of appointment should be defined in the standing rules.

A *steering committee* is a small group of local leaders who guide the creation or formation of the county program building committee.

A *study group* is a special committee appointed to collect, study and interpret background information in analyzing the situation for a specific area of concern. It reports its findings to the county program building committee which in turn uses the information in making program decisions. The membership may come from the program building committee, subcommittees and resource people.

A *special committee* is appointed for a specific purpose and exists until its work is accomplished, unless discharged sooner.

Subcommittees, usually standing committees, are created by the program building committee, either directly or through the executive committee. They are established to deal with broad problems or major interests of the county or the area.

A written *county program* is a record of the long-range plans made by the program building committee, based on its analysis of the county situation. It points up opportunities and the major problems identified by the committee with appropriate objectives and priorities for carrying out the plans.

Background information is information which reveals situations and conditions affecting the welfare of people. It may be used to identify conditions and trends over several decades and is useful in identifying opportunities and problems relating to the social, economic, educational and physical characteristics of a county.

A *problem* is an identified, felt need. In program building, it is any condition or specific situation where the people, after careful study, determine that some action or change is needed to bring about an improvement.

A *target audience* is an identifiable clientele group designated to receive priority in an educational program directed toward meeting needs and interests shared by members of this group.

A *long-range objective* is a statement which indicates the action or changes that specific individuals or groups of people need to make to improve the conditions contributing to a major problem which is not likely to be solved in a short period of time.

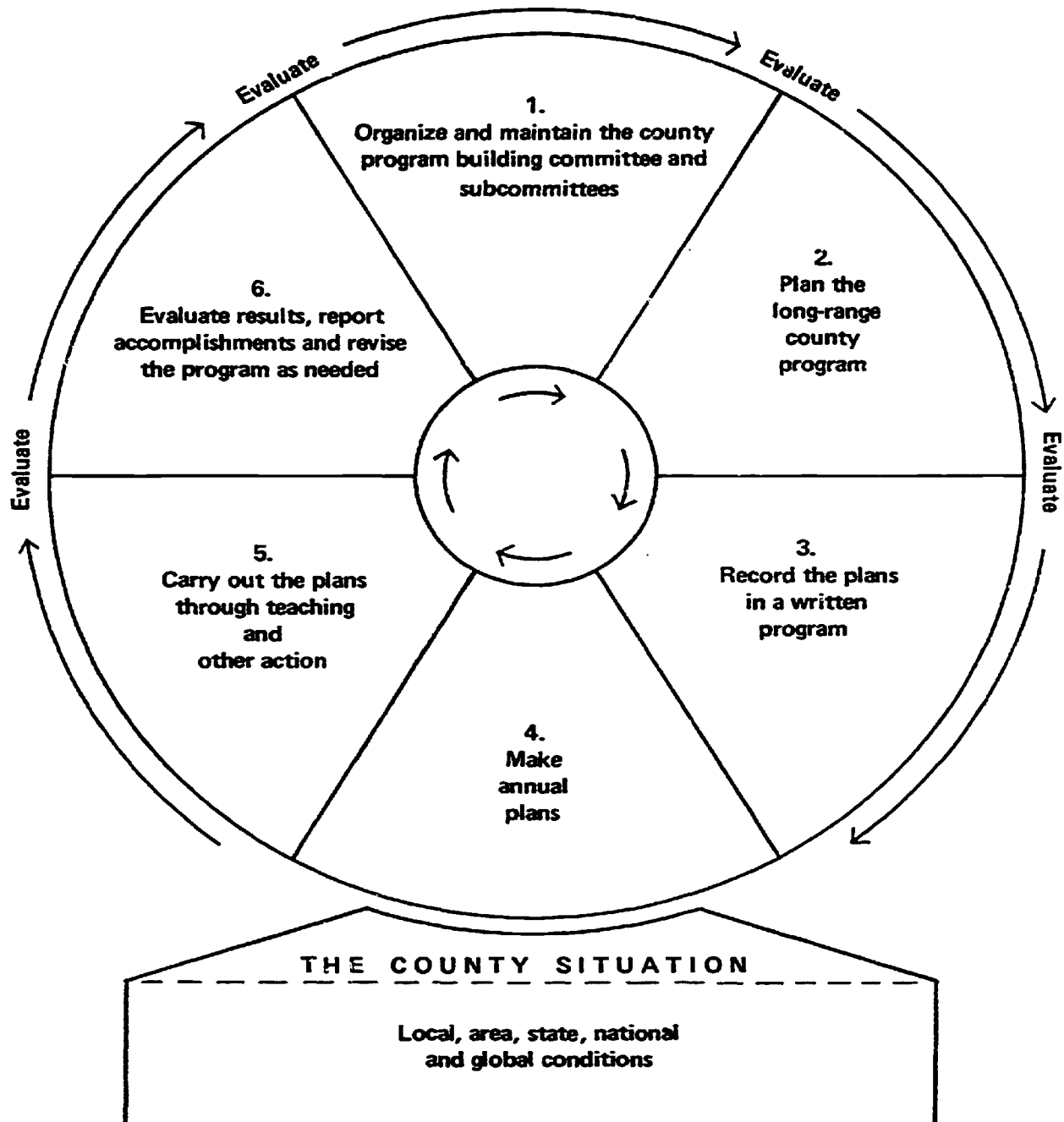
An *annual plan of work* is a written plan of action that tells who, when, where, how and what will be done about a problem. It is a blueprint for moving toward stated program objectives.

An *annual goal* indicates the change that a specific audience is expected to make as a result of one year's educational and other efforts. Annual goals should be set as increments leading toward the accomplishment of each long-range objective that the county program building committee and the subcommittees select for emphasis in a given year.

Evaluation is the appraisal or estimate of the value or quality of something. As used in this handbook, evaluation refers to the continuous process of appraising the quality of the program building organization, the planning process, the written county program, the annual plans of work, the teaching and action, and the ultimate attainment of the long-range objectives.

Standing rules are rules by which the organization abides and which are adopted by the membership for its own guidance. The number and character of standing rules will vary, but the following subjects usually are included: name, purpose, membership, officers, terms of office, meetings, finances, executive committee, subcommittees, voting body, quorum and amendments.

THE PROGRAM BUILDING PROCESS



The Scope of County Programs

Since counties differ in many respects, the scope or breadth of program concern will vary among counties. Metropolitan counties are usually industrial and highly organized for the development of business and industry. Many rural counties need to explore new opportunities for economic progress in business and industry. A great many counties need more cooperation in planning for the solution of problems that are of mutual concern to both urban and rural areas. Therefore, the county program should be concerned with the development of all opportunities to achieve the potential of both the human and the physical resources of the county. Such a program will be broader than agriculture and home economics. Where there are problems that affect several counties, committees may seek ways of developing joint program efforts to alleviate the problem.

Extension Service personnel usually will not be responsible for implementation of every facet of the county program, but will be directly involved with the following areas of program emphasis:

- Efficiency in agricultural production
- Efficiency in marketing, distribution and utilization of agricultural products
- Conservation, development and use of natural resources
- Management on the farm and in the home
- Family living
- Youth development
- Leadership development
- Community improvement and resource development
- Public affairs education.

The County Program Building Organization

Since cooperation and local support are essential for a successful program building operation, it is important that the purposes and functions of the program building organization be explored thoroughly with commissioners courts, chambers of commerce leaders, development foundations and similar organizations. The coordination of efforts and unity of purpose achieved in this way will provide opportunities for all local organizations to make their maximum contribution toward reaching mutual objectives. The work of the committee should not duplicate the efforts of any organization presently functioning in the county; however, there are many times when a joint approach will be advantageous. It is essential that this be understood by all who assist in the committee organization.

The work of a program building committee differs from that of many other kinds of committees because it begins with only a general agreement on functions and responsibilities. Other committees' assignments are specific and limited in scope and convey something about the work load involved and the amount of time members will be expected to give.

The continuous nature of the program building committee makes it important for a definite tenure

of committee membership. Otherwise, it will be difficult to attract many busy individuals needed on the committee.

The committee, initially, must define its own general and specific purposes within a wide range of possible scope and responsibility. This requirement calls for corresponding abilities that might not be so important in other committees with more limited functions.

In many counties where agents have been confronted with the need for organizing a program building committee, they have begun with a temporary *steering committee*.

This group should be formed after the Extension agents have counseled with key leaders, heads of local organizations and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) agency representatives in the county. Identification and inventory of all relevant groups and interests is preliminary to deciding what particular interests or groups should be included in the committee's expanding membership. Those asked to serve on the steering committee should be given a thorough explanation of the program building process, the purpose and functions of the committee, and the desired qualifications of committee members; otherwise, they will not be able to impart an

understanding to other organizations and prospective members. On completing its work, the steering committee is either dissolved or absorbed into the membership of the program building committee.

After the program building committee has functioned long enough so that the members know how they want the organization to operate, it will adopt standing rules which will outline the structure of the organization. These will also prescribe the method for selecting members and the tenure of membership. (See Appendix for example.)

Qualifications of Members

The essential qualifications of an effective program building committee member are of two kinds. First, a committee member should have those qualities which enable a person to function well as a member of a working group, plus the demonstrated ability to think objectively about the interests *not* represented on the committee as well as those which *are* represented. Such people serve as a means of incorporating wisdom and experience of others with experiences and desires like their own. Among the other important qualifications are the following:

- Has demonstrated leadership qualities in his or her community
- Has demonstrated ability to work harmoniously with others—active in some community improvement effort such as school board, chamber of commerce, church, etc.
- Holds a respected position in the area
- Has capacity to influence constructive public opinion in the area
- Willing to devote a reasonable amount of time and effort to the committee's work for the specified term of office
- Committed to the purposes of the program building committee
- Selected or recommended for membership by local people who have knowledge and understanding of the purposes of program building
- Represents an interested group of people in the area
- Accepts membership after knowing the purposes of program building and functions of the committee.

The second kind of qualifications are those relating to the member's role in his community. Some individuals have established themselves as leaders in

thinking and in getting action on concerns of the people and problems of the area. These same people likely will also be leaders in a particular group or community. In organizing the program building committee, the following should be considered for representation:

Farmers and ranchers
Homemakers
Youth
Merchants
Agribusiness persons
Industrialists
Educators
Ministers
Community organizations
Soil conservation districts
ASCS county committees
FHA county committees
Women's organizations
Chambers of commerce
Industrial foundations
Occupational and professional groups
Bankers
Civic leaders
Medical profession
Health and welfare workers
Commissioners courts
Farm and commodity organizations
City governments
Civic groups
Others as needed

USDA agency personnel in the county should not be members of the program building committee. They should, however, assist the committee in an advisory or resource capacity.

Officers

The county program building committee should elect a chairman, vice chairman, secretary and other officers needed to achieve its purpose.

Executive Committee

The officers and other members, as determined by the organizational structure and designated in the standing rules, make up the membership of the executive committee.

Subcommittees

The number of subcommittees and the nature of their assignments will be governed by the scope of

the county program. By virtue of their being "a part of" or a subdivision of the program building committee, they should not supplant the authority or the functions of the program building committee. Subcommittees are usually referred to by such terms as "beef cattle committee," "committee on aging," "family living committee," "4-H committee" or some other name indicating their area of responsibility. The number and kind of subcommittees needed should be determined only after a thorough study of the county situation.

Members of subcommittees should be selected to represent and reflect the concerns and interests related to the subcommittee's assignment. The criteria for selecting individual members are essentially the same as those listed under "membership" on page

7. The chairman of each subcommittee should be a member of the county program building committee. Dependent upon the committee's organizational structure, they may also be members of the executive committee.

Special Committees

Special committees are a part of the program building organization. Their assignments are specific and usually of short duration. Membership may come from the program building committee, subcommittees and from among the people. Chairmen are appointed by the program building committee chairman. Special committees should be promptly dissolved after completing their assignment.

Functions, Organizational Structure and Membership of the County Program Building Committee

While its major functions are to plan, implement and evaluate a county program, the committee must also perform several specific tasks. The most important task is to provide coordination and leadership to the total county program. This may be accomplished through either of two approaches: the *program building committee* itself may assume this

responsibility, or it may be the delegated responsibility of the *executive committee*. The approach chosen by the committee leaders and the Extension agents, based upon their knowledge of the county situation, determines the ultimate organizational structure of the committee. Guidelines for each approach are outlined below.

Guidelines When PROGRAM BUILDING COMMITTEE Coordinates And Provides Leadership To The County Program

Functions of the County Program Building Committee

The following tasks, some of which require continuous attention, are essential to the success of the committee:

- Analyze the county situation to identify significant facts, changes and trends. Attention should be given to local, area, state, national and global conditions that concern the county
- Identify new opportunities, problems and interests of the people
- Establish long-range objectives which will bring about the desired changes
- Study area, state and national programs for which Extension is responsible and help determine how these may be implemented most effectively
- Determine priorities for carrying out the program and develop alternatives for reaching each objective
- Develop a long-range county program, and delegate the job of writing it to well-qualified individuals
- Interpret the program to the people of the county
- Help people of the county understand the nature and scope of the educational responsibility of the Extension Service as a public supported agency to serve all segments of society
- Establish and maintain cooperative relationships with existing groups and organizations in the county
- Assume an active role for carrying out some phases of the program that are of county-wide interest and which require county-wide leadership
- Establish or dissolve subcommittees on the basis of need
- Make assignments to appropriate subcommittees and coordinate their work in support of mutual objectives
- Provide opportunities and the incentive for

local groups, organizations and agencies to work together in implementing the program

- Review its own work and that of its subcommittees; evaluate accomplishments; revise the plans when and where needed
- Make a periodic self-evaluation of its own organization and structure in accord with the changing county situation and the functions of the group.

Membership of the County Program Building Committee

The committee may be comprised of 30 to 45 people. This includes the officers, the subcommittee chairmen and other leaders needed to provide representation of various economic, social and geographic interests and relevant organizations in the county.

Meetings of the County Program Building Committee

The program building committee should meet often enough to accomplish its work. This will require two or more meetings each year.

Functions of the Executive Committee

The executive committee's authority should be spelled out in the standing rules. Under this approach the committee serves as an advisory body to the total program building organization and conducts business in the interim between scheduled program building committee meetings. The executive committee may also

- Meet at the call of the chairman to advise, approve and expedite the plans and activities pertaining to program building in the county
- Assist the chairman in making plans for committee meetings
- Recommend membership replacements
- Review the reports and recommendations of subcommittees and study groups and assist in pre-

paring these reports and recommendations for discussion with the program building committee

- Make plans to implement decisions of the program building committee

- Study area, state and national programs for which Extension is responsible and help determine how these may be implemented most effectively

- Coordinate the action of subcommittees

- Recommend that subcommittees be established or dissolved on the basis of need

- Assume leadership for program evaluation.

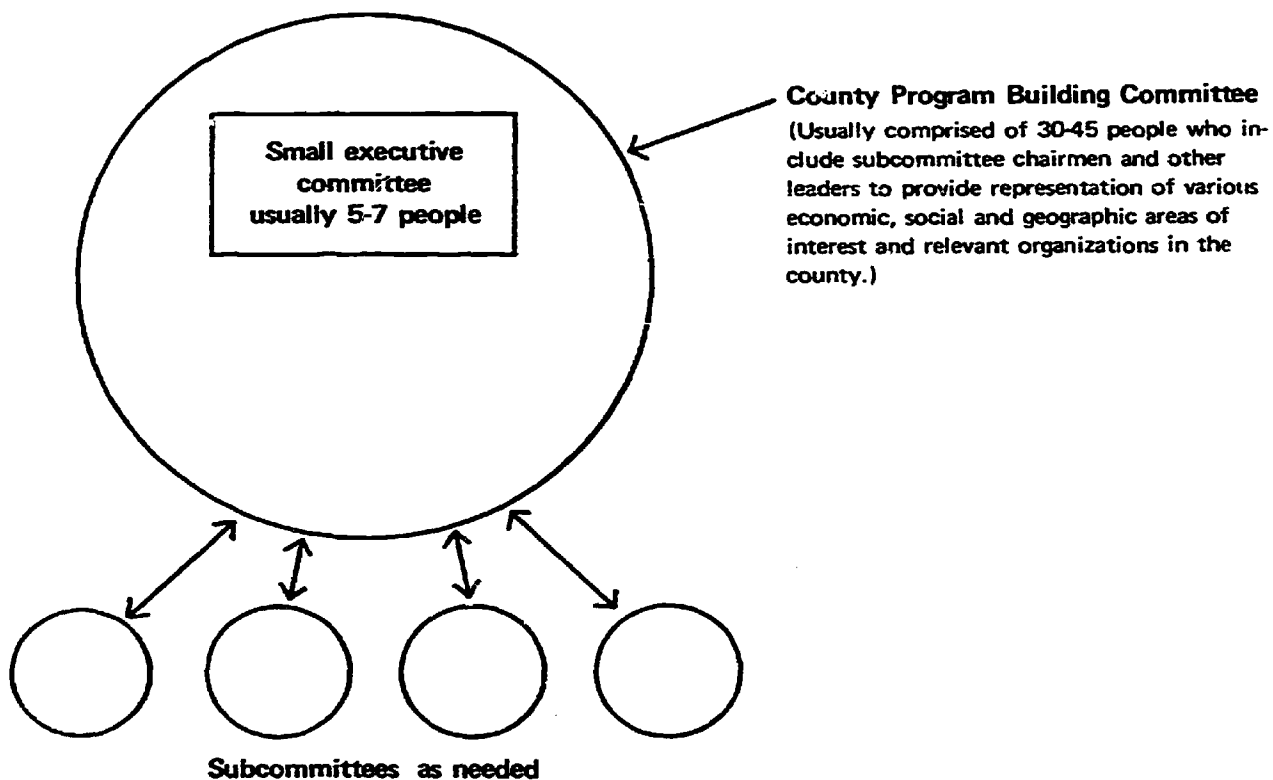
Membership of Executive Committee

Under this approach the executive committee would have about five to seven members including the officers and two or more members-at-large.

Meetings of the Executive Committee

The executive committee should meet upon the call of the chairman to assist in making major decisions required to carry out its functions.

ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE WHEN COUNTY PROGRAM BUILDING COMMITTEE COORDINATES AND PROVIDES LEADERSHIP TO THE COUNTY PROGRAM



Guidelines When EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE Coordinates And Provides Leadership To The County Program

Functions of the Executive Committee

Under this approach, leadership for the overall program building operation rests with the executive committee. The tasks below, some of which require continuous attention, are essential to the success of the committee.

- Maintain an organization of subcommittees to be responsible for major program areas
 - Help agents identify and obtain qualified persons so that existing subcommittees will have the best qualified people serving as members at all times
 - Establish a new subcommittee when needed, and assist agents in identifying and enlisting qualified committee members (Establishment of a new subcommittee may result from needs recognized within the county or from program responsibilities designated for Extension at the national or state level)
- Work cooperatively with subcommittees to accomplish the following:
 - Analyze the county situation by identifying significant facts, changes and trends
 - Identify new opportunities, problems and interests of the people
 - Establish long-range objectives to bring about the desired changes
 - Develop priorities to help concentrate efforts on important problems in various program areas
- Study area, state and national programs for which Extension is responsible and determine how these may be implemented most successfully in the county
- Review periodically the county situation to identify new opportunities, problems and interests of the people. When a new need is recognized, delegate the responsibility to the appropriate subcommittee or other group or establish a new subcommittee
- Assist in identifying and enlisting well-qualified executive committee members and resource people as needed
- Develop standing rules to govern the maintenance and operation of the program building organization

- Work cooperatively with county Extension agents to
 - Maintain an up-to-date long-range county program
 - Distribute the program to appropriate individuals and groups
 - Interpret the program to the people of the county
 - Help people of the county understand the nature and scope of Extension's educational responsibility, as a public supported agency, to serve all segments of society
- Keep informed on the work of the various subcommittees so that coordination of effort is facilitated and assistance provided when needed
- Make necessary preparations to insure the success of each meeting of the county program building committee
- Establish and maintain cooperative relationships with other groups and organizations in the county
- Review its own work and that of the subcommittees, evaluate accomplishments and take the lead in revising plans when and where needed
- Make a periodic evaluation of its own structure and functions in relation to the situation prevailing in the county.

Membership of the Executive Committee

Under this approach the executive committee is usually comprised of 12 to 20 members, including the officers, subcommittee chairmen and other key leaders.

Meetings of the Executive Committee

The *executive committee* should meet as often as needed to carry out its responsibilities. It is anticipated that this would require a minimum of three or four meetings per year.

Functions of the County Program Building Committee

When a county determines that the executive committee is the group to provide coordination and leadership, the program building committee assumes the following functions:

- Communicating plans and accomplishments of the various subcommittees
- Helping all members understand the county program and the program building organization of which they are a part

- Providing recognition, inspiration and motivation for program building committee members.

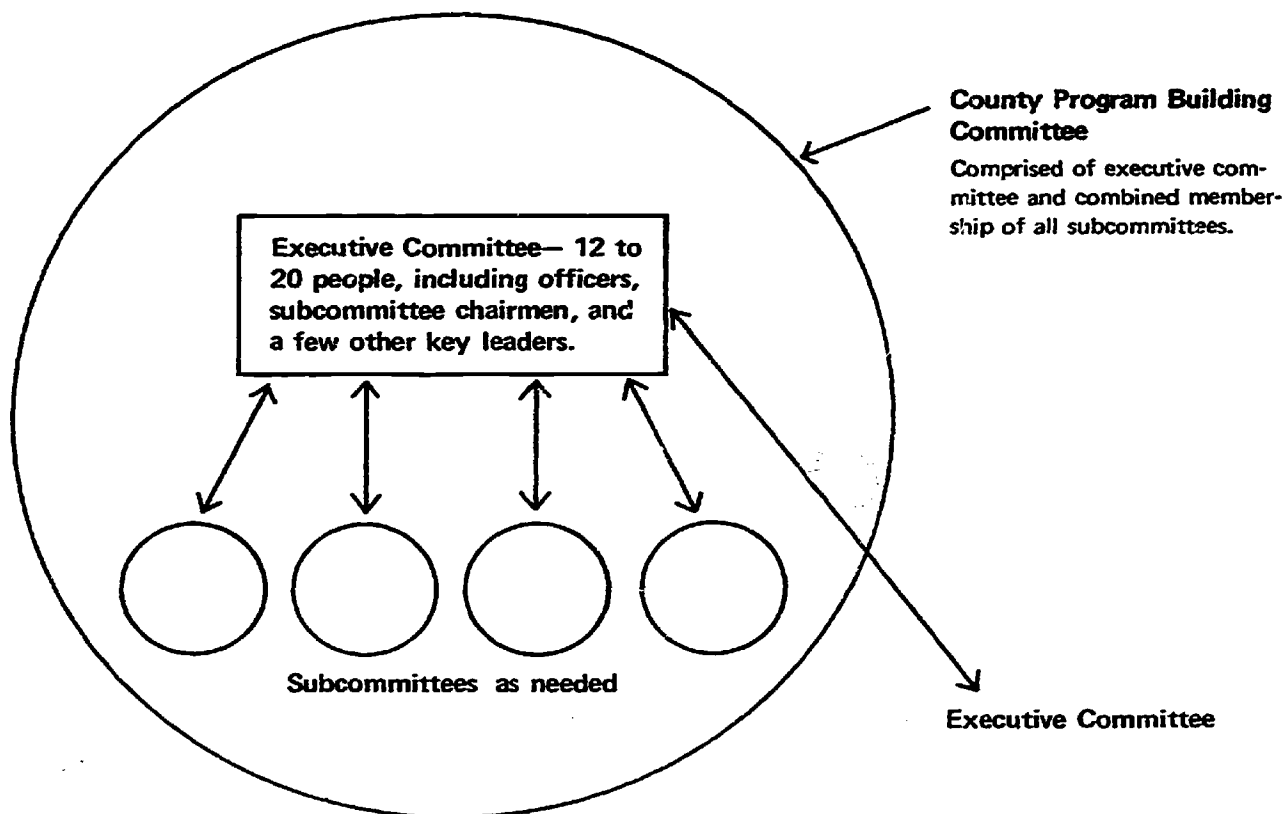
Membership of the County Program Building Committee

The committee is comprised of the executive committee and the combined membership of all subcommittees.

Meetings of the County Program Building Committee

The committee should meet at least once each year to help carry out the committee's functions.

ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE WHEN EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE COORDINATES AND PROVIDES LEADERSHIP TO THE COUNTY PROGRAM



Evaluating the Effectiveness of the Organization

An important function of the county program building committee, either directly or through the executive committee, is to evaluate its own effectiveness as a group that is capable and equipped to perform the other listed functions. In making its self-evaluation, attention should be given to the following:

- *The number of members* on the committee and subcommittees is important. It is generally agreed by researchers of group dynamics that a committee with fewer than five members tends to lose the advantages of group work. Therefore, each unit of the program building organization expected to work as a group should have five members or more. However, when the number exceeds 25 persons in a single working body, the group loses effectiveness.

- *Interests represented* on the committee is another factor to consider in evaluating the organization. After the different groups or interests are identified, a decision must be made on the minimum number required to fairly represent and accurately reflect the concerns and points of view of the constituent groups and interests.

- *The quality of the committee* or its subcommittees depends not only on the number of people but also on the competencies and attitudes of the individuals who compose it. Representativeness means having insight into the problems of the people or a particular segment of them. It means knowing at any particular time what they are thinking, their problems, their wants and their needs. This kind of representativeness does not necessarily imply a geographical or organizational affiliation. Rather, it suggests an ability to perceive, understand and think about the concerns and interests of constituents in much the same way as the constituents that the member represents. It includes the capacity to analyze and arrive at solutions that are sound, practical and acceptable to the people. Few have these capacities in full measure; others have the latent potential which they will develop if given the opportunity. A common mistake is to look for this kind of person only among those already in positions of prominence and responsibility.

- *Changing conditions in the county* which affect the social and economic situation may be cause for changing the composition of the program building committee.

Duties of Specific Parts of the Organization

The overall effectiveness of the program building organization will be no better than the performance of its various parts. Each committee should establish its own operational procedures and eventually adopt them as standing rules. Certain functions, duties and qualifications associated with a particular office or subdivision of the committee are listed below:

1. *The chairman* of the committee should be action oriented with a drive for accomplishment. He should understand, believe in and practice the program building process in performing his duties. As the chief executive officer, he must provide effective leadership and constantly strive to build harmonious and productive relationships within the organization. He should also be willing to study and learn the business of the committee and effective procedures for carrying out the chairman's job. He should be able to preside at meetings and lead discussions. The manner in which the chairman presides should create a climate that (a) encourages participation, (b) allows all ideas or contributions to emerge, (c) keeps the general and specific purposes of the session before the group and (d) contributes to determining and attaining the committee's purposes.

The chairman's responsibilities are varied and actually shift as committee work progresses. The Extension agents are important consultants to the chairman and should provide him the assistance and resources needed to carry out his responsibilities. The duties of the chairman include the following:

- Helps select replacement members of the committee

- Assists in developing standing rules

- Sees that the nominating committee understands duties and qualifications of offices for which it is to submit nominations

- Appoints subcommittee chairmen and assists in selection of members

- Makes a general work schedule for the committee after consulting with the members and the Extension agents

- Calls meetings of the committee and the executive committee and sees that each member is notified

- Prepares agenda for meetings to help work proceed in an orderly and efficient manner

- Presides at meetings and frequently leads discussions

- Assigns tasks to subcommittees, special committees or individuals

- Establishes effective communication between the committee and subcommittees to insure that plans are put into action

- Reviews and approves minutes of meetings prepared by the secretary

- Establishes and maintains a spirit of cooperation between the program building committee and the leaders of other groups, agencies and organizations in the county whose objectives are similar to those of the program building committee

- Leads the committee to appraise the effectiveness of program building work in the county and initiates plans for improvement as needed.

2. *The vice chairman* should be fully qualified for the job of chairman. To have officers with as much experience as possible, he should be selected in view of his succeeding to the chairmanship. His working experience should be designed to make it easy for him to assume the chairman's duties when the occasion demands. In the absence of the chairman, he functions for that officer. Other duties may be performed as delegated by the chairman and as prescribed in the standing rules.

3. *The secretary* keeps the business records of the committee, including the minutes or proceedings of each meeting. From time to time, he may obtain resources or references needed by the committee. The secretary also initiates and prepares correspondence related to committee business.

4. *The subcommittee chairman* should be selected in a manner spelled out in the standing rules. The major role of the chairman is to provide leadership to the subcommittee while maintaining a relationship among the members that results in productive work and member satisfaction. The duties of the subcommittee chairman include the following:

- Helps select replacement members of the subcommittee

- Works with the agent in contacting members to serve on the subcommittee

- Makes a general work schedule for the subcommittee after consulting with the members and the Extension agent responsible for assisting the committee

- Calls meetings of the subcommittee and sees that each member is notified

- Prepares agenda for meetings to help work proceed in an orderly and efficient manner

- Presides at meetings and frequently leads discussions

- Assigns tasks to subcommittee members

- Takes an active part in educational activities planned by the subcommittee

- Reviews and approves minutes of meetings prepared by the secretary

- Motivates and encourages member participation

- Leads the subcommittee to appraise the effectiveness of its work and initiates plans for improvement as needed

- Serves as a member of the county program building committee and may also be on the executive committee, reporting plans and accomplishments and providing two-way communication on program direction.

5. *Subcommittees* accept specific responsibility for certain phases of the county program. Much of their work will be making annual plans and activating them. They also will be involved in long-range planning. This implies that each subcommittee will

- Establish appropriate long-range objectives based upon a thorough study of the county situation

- Study the county program and give particular attention to all information pertaining to the subcommittee's assignment

- Collect and interpret additional background information as needed

- Make plans for incorporating relevant area, state and national programs in its assigned program area

- Establish annual goals

- Develop plans of action and discuss annual plans with the program building committee

- Assume responsibility for carrying out the plans made by the subcommittee

- Report, interpret and publicize accomplishments

- Review, evaluate and revise the action program as needed.

Each subcommittee should meet as often as needed to plan, carry out and evaluate the educational program in its assigned area.

6. *Committee members* have definite roles and responsibilities as do the officers. A member should be familiar with the purposes of program building and the functions of the committee. He should be informed about the problems and issues with which the committee must deal. Members should also

- Attend and actively participate in all committee meetings
- Serve as a channel of communication between the committee and the group or community they represent
- Contribute ideas and offer suggestions based on their knowledge and experience
- Consider problems and interests of those not represented on the committee
- Help collect and analyze data and take part in decisions, planning and action
- React to and evaluate proposals that come before the committee
- Interpret the process, purposes and objectives of the committee to appropriate groups and the general public
- Provide leadership for implementing action programs in their own groups and communities.

Advisory, Technical and Cooperative Support

Agency personnel, professional workers and many private citizens who are not members of the program building organization can make a major contribution to its work. The following are examples of the assistance that may be provided by certain groups.

Extension Agents

County Extension agents are key figures in the program building effort in any county. They have the responsibility for organizing the committee, for maintaining it as an effective working group and for developing and implementing the phases of the county program for which Extension is responsible. The organization of the committee may be accomplished through a steering committee as described on page 6 or by working with key leaders and other agency personnel. This requires identification of the various interests among the people and study of the various organizations and geographical areas to determine which should be represented on the committee. The role agents perform in organizing and maintaining the committee is unique because no

other agency has this responsibility. It is a difficult but rewarding experience for the agents and committee members because each acquires new competencies and leadership skills while the committee evolves into an effective working group. Patience, cooperation, determination and a strong sense of purpose are essential.

Some of the specific tasks agents must perform in carrying out their responsibilities are as follows:

- Help develop criteria for the selection of committee officers
- Train the officers and subcommittee chairmen to perform effectively the duties of their offices. This may be done through orientation on the purpose and functions of program building and by working with the officers to plan and rehearse their tasks prior to each meeting until the desired level of skill is attained. Serving as an advisor to committee leaders is an unending job. New members will need the same kind of help as other members received in the beginning. Experienced committee members can help agents in training new ones
- Help the committee members and guide them in gathering needed information for identifying problems and alternate courses of action and assist in the actual analysis and interpretation of information that is gathered
- Assume responsibility for seeing that the decisions and long-range plans made by the committee are recorded in a written county program
- Work with the committee and subcommittees to develop and write an annual plan of work based on the county program
- Help the committees determine and get the needed cooperation and resources to implement the plans
- Serve as technical advisors in agriculture, home economics and related subjects, in both adult and youth work
- Interpret and publicize plans and accomplishments through a variety of methods, including mass media
- Promote good working relations among committee members, other agencies and with all publics
- Report to their supervisors on the progress and accomplishments in program building, and request staff assistance when help is needed
- Provide or arrange for the secretarial and related services needed by the committee

- Evaluate continuously all aspects of the county program building effort, and suggest changes or improvements as needed.

Other Extension Service Personnel

The *director* of the Texas Agricultural Extension Service, with the help of the *administrative staff*, is responsible for administering Cooperative Extension work in the state. Part of this responsibility is the establishment of policies and appropriate procedures to guide county Extension agents in the development of county programs. Since 1949, it has been the declared policy of the Extension Service that county Extension agents in each county shall organize and maintain a county program building committee and work through that committee in planning and implementing a county program based on the problems, needs and interests of the people as determined by them. Therefore, the administration must arrange for the appropriate training in program building for all Extension personnel. With the rapid turnover of personnel and the many changes in job assignments, this in itself is a continuing responsibility. The director and his staff must strive to create a favorable administrative climate which will motivate all Extension workers to accept their responsibilities seriously and adjust their work accordingly.

District agents, as supervisors, convey and interpret administrative policies to county Extension agents. Therefore, it is essential that they understand the program building process fully and help agents acquire the understanding, skills and techniques they need to do their job. District agents must be sufficiently familiar with the situation in each county to guide the agents as they strive to organize and maintain the committee needed to develop the best possible county program.

A primary role of district agents is the objective evaluation of Extension educational programs in each county—a responsibility which they share with the administrative staff and their agents. As this evaluation is made, district agents will

- Recognize training needs of agents and arrange for such training
- Coordinate requests for specialists' assistance to counties and arrange for them to participate in program building organization work, as well as program planning, implementation and evaluation
- Counsel with agents on their individual problems in program building and help them find the most practical and logical solutions.

District agents can help all who have a part in program building in a county to recognize that the

planning of the county program is only the beginning of the process and that the best written county programs are of little value unless the people are also committed to carrying out the plans they have made.

Extension specialists, as resource people and experts in their respective fields of subject matter, can provide a quality of program building assistance to agents and committees that may not be available from any other source. They are not only responsible for the dissemination of accurate and useful subject matter, but they must also be prepared to assist agents and committees in developing long-range plans, annual plans, a variety of program activities for implementing the plans and, ultimately, in program evaluation. The development of an effective educational program in any county depends on the appropriate subject-matter specialists having an understanding of the problem at hand and the people affected by it. Therefore, it is essential that specialists be adept in the program building process and have up-to-date knowledge about program building in each county in which they work. With this knowledge and understanding they may assist agents and committees in the following ways:

- Identifying useful background information which committees may use in analyzing the county situation
- Helping in the analysis of background information to determine every important aspect of broad problems
- Developing guidelines for agents and committees to use in solving problems
- Assisting agents in working with committees to develop annual plans
- Working with other specialists and resource people to coordinate subject matter to be used in program activities
- Assisting agents to train leaders who in turn will teach subject matter to local groups
- Maintaining a flow of new ideas, teaching materials, methods and research information which may be used by agents and committees to plan, carry out and evaluate specific educational programs.

Specialists can provide much of the above assistance by correspondence and working with agents. However, experience has shown that the specialist's contribution is enhanced when he meets with the agent and chairman or the agent and subcommittee to provide technical assistance.

The *program specialists* have the responsibility of identifying the most effective procedures and meth-

ods in program building and developing program building training plans. They are available on request to assist agents and local leaders in organizational problems, in planning the long-range county program, in developing annual plans of work, in leadership training activities and in appraising the effectiveness of program building in the county.

All Extension staff members should study the county program and the current plan of work as regular procedure in preparation for work in any county.

USDA Representatives

Agency representatives are generally organized as an official group in each county. Although the composition of such groups varies, membership usually includes local representatives of all agencies of USDA. In addition, the group may have members from other relevant agencies or organizations operating in the county—federal, state or local. The continuing purpose of these groups is to provide technical assistance to county and area committees in the development of resources.

This group provides a means for coordinating programs involving USDA agencies. The integration and coordination of such programs are essential for the orderly, planned development of a county or an area and require clear and effective horizontal and vertical communication. *Horizontal* communication is needed at the county level (1) between USDA agencies and the program building committee; (2) between USDA agencies *within* the county and (3) between the USDA agencies and the county Extension agents. *Vertical* communication follows the "chain-of-command" for each USDA agency involved, but it should also be maintained between the local group and its state counterpart.

Among other things, this USDA organization should

- Develop an understanding of other agency roles, responsibilities and programs
- Suggest to the steering or executive committee the names of key leaders who may be considered for possible membership on the program building committee
- Provide the committees with background information, production data and statistics for the county and surrounding territory
- Analyze and interpret background information, particularly that which is related to agriculture and natural resources

- Identify the resources and technical assistance needed from other agencies not located in the county

- Suggest alternatives for reaching program objectives, particularly those related to the production, marketing and distribution of agricultural commodities and the use of agricultural lands

- Provide needed technical assistance and resources in their areas of competence in planning and carrying out the county program

- Support and help implement the county program objectives in their own agency plans of action to the greatest possible extent.

The Extension Service and other USDA agencies have certain responsibilities and functions delegated to them by law and local agency personnel are required to meet these responsibilities. For example, Extension is responsible for conducting educational activities to interpret farm programs enacted by the Congress, as well as for conducting educational work on problems of state or national concern. Other USDA agencies may be responsible for providing technical, financial or other assistance provided in the legislation. Program building committees and subcommittees need to be aware of the specific responsibilities of each USDA agency with whom they work.

Other Resource Agencies, Groups, Individuals

In every county the real wealth of human resources is found among many voluntary agencies and groups to which people give their time and talents. There are many individuals, particularly among professional and business groups, as well as public and private agencies, who have useful knowledge, technical competence and experience that can make the difference between success and failure in program building. Many are authorities in their own right and can provide assistance that may not be available from another source. Particularly important are persons associated with the businesses and industries that serve the home and family needs. Likewise, individuals connected with local schools and youth organizations have much to contribute in the areas of family living and youth development. These resource people, as individuals and as groups, should be involved in the planning phases of program building to capitalize on their knowledge and skills in carrying out the county program. Research, as well as experience in county Extension work, gives strong evidence that people have little or no commitment to plans which they have had no part in making.

The Process Of Planning The County Program

The planning of a long-range county program can be a challenging experience for the people of any county if they are willing to provide the leadership and to participate actively in the planning process.

Little can be accomplished from plans that do not have the endorsement and active support of local people. Certainly the program building committee, as a body representing the people, will seek and expect the support and assistance of the Extension Service, USDA agencies and other county groups. (See pages 15-17, "Advisory, Technical and Co-operative Support.") However, a county program planned primarily by agency personnel is a poor substitute for one planned by the people, even if the objectives are identical. Involvement of the people in the planning phase is essential; otherwise the program becomes an "agency" program rather than the "people's" program.

Studying the County Situation

The purpose of making an analysis of the county situation is to enable the committee to identify existing trends and conditions and compare these with the environmental qualities and conditions that could and should exist. Based on information about present conditions and changes needed, the committee can plan a course of action to bring about the desired changes. As the committee makes this analysis, it will need background information pertaining to local, area, state, national and global conditions.

Kinds of Background Information Needed

General. Information of a general nature about the county will help the committee get an overview of the county. Examples are

- Location with respect to
 - Metropolitan areas
 - Industrial centers
 - Markets
 - Transportation facilities
 - Recreation and tourist attractions

- Geographic features such as
 - Rivers and river junctions
 - Natural or potential harbors
 - Natural scenery
 - Lakes
 - Shorelines
 - Topography

Climatic characteristics

- Length of growing season
- Average date of first and last frost
- Annual rainfall data
- Humidity
- Temperature range

Historical facts about

- Early settling and organization of the county
- Migration of people
- Development of agriculture and industry
- Discovery of important natural resources
- Development of social and cultural characteristics

Amounts of income from major sources

Educational institutions

Population Characteristics. A study of a county population with appropriate comparisons with the population of other counties, the state and the nation is useful in analyzing the county situation. Certain characteristics are associated with an expanding population in a prosperous area, while a declining population in a low-income area has entirely different characteristics. Useful population data include the following:

- Growth trends over several decades
- Migration patterns
- Changes in distribution of rural and urban population
- Changes in age distribution and important age groups over several decades
- Educational characteristics of school age and adult population
- Levels of family income and major income groups

Labor Force. The labor force is an important segment of the population and is influenced by the characteristics of the total population. In studying the labor force the committee should consider

- Its size, the number of employed and unemployed
- Percentage of women in the labor force, employed and unemployed

- Percentage of married women, particularly those with children at home
- Quality of labor, skilled and unskilled
- Major occupational groups
- Employment conditions
- Major sources of income
- Employment opportunities and labor or re-training facilities and needs
- Labor deficiencies.

Family Living. Background information on family living should indicate the present conditions, changing situations and future needs of families in the county. Comparative studies of information from local, state and national sources should be made. General population characteristics such as place of residence, age groups, educational levels, sources of income, income distribution, working mothers, number and size of families, mobility of families, organizations for family participation, public facilities, family characteristics and family living patterns will be applicable to each area of family living.

Specific facts, changes and trends related to clothing, foods and nutrition, housing, management, family life, health and recreation will be useful. For each area of family living, these items of information should be collected:

- Production and consumption patterns
- Existing customs and traditions
- Community facilities
- Educational opportunities and needs
- Tenure, condition, storage, care and kinds of equipment
- Nutritional and health status of family members
- Consumer education needs
- Family financial practices of buying, planning and record keeping
- Leadership opportunities.

Youth. In addition to information about the total population and family living conditions, considerably more information is needed about the youth in the county. Youth work should be an important phase of every county program. Some of the needs of youth are universal, but their problems and opportunities vary with local conditions. In analyzing the youth situation, these matters should be considered:

- Percent of population under 20 years of age

- Distribution of youth by ages: under 5 years, 5-9 years, 10-14 years, 15-19 years

- Percent of families with children at home
- Educational status of young people
- Educational facilities and school attendance data
- Active youth organizations and percent of eligible youth they are reaching
- Rate and causes of delinquency
- Rate of teenage marriages
- Counseling services available for youth
- Opportunities youth have to make good choices of colleges and careers
- Job opportunities
- Recreational facilities
- Available and qualified youth leadership
- Opportunities and needs for vocational training

• 4-H situation. This should include the following: number of 4-H members, members by age groups, projects available, enrollment by projects, number of project leaders by projects, number of school and community clubs and organization leaders for each, number of junior leaders, special events and activities held, degree to which program meets needs and interests of youth, citizenship and leadership opportunities, and how the 4-H program is planned and coordinated.

Organizations. The leadership structure of a county is not always obvious. To discover it may require careful and systematic analysis of all the communities and the organized groups that function within each community. Certain leaders control the business, industry and finance with considerable influence from political and professional groups. Although many of these leaders may not be members of the program building committee, they do need to understand and be informed about its purposes.

An inventory of the organizations and informal groupings in the county is desirable for several reasons. It will reflect how the people are organized for business, professional, social, political, civic, religious, educational and cultural pursuits. Within these categories, other individuals hold either formal or informal positions of leadership with varying degrees of influence. Information gained through an inventory will be useful to the committee as it seeks new members to make the program building organization more representative of the people. It will also

reveal other important groups or individuals who, because of their training, experience, position and influence, can make valuable contributions as resource people to the committee and the subcommittees. An inventory of organizations will also equip the program building committee to involve appropriate groups in the planning or implementation of some particular phase of the county program.

Natural Resources. A great many counties have one or more natural resources which may offer an opportunity for economic development. The impact of urbanization may create demand for agricultural and rural lands to be diverted to new uses. An inventory of both public and private lands (whether cultivated, pastures, ranges, timber or idle) would be useful information. Water resources—either surface, underground or coastal—offer many opportunities for the development of agriculture, industry or recreation areas. Although most known deposits of oil and gas are developed soon after their discovery, there may be other underground minerals such as clay, sand or gravel that could provide raw materials to support some local industry. Attention should be given to the wildlife and timber resources of the county.

Agriculture. The agricultural situation needs to be studied from the standpoint of local, area, state, national and international conditions. Useful information includes land use patterns, trends in the number and size of farm and ranch units, levels of production, marketing practices and facilities, the nature of capital investments in agriculture, the degree of mechanization and the labor situation. The analysis of the agricultural situation should help the committee answer these questions about the agricultural economy:

- What is the relative position of agriculture to the total economy of the county?
- Has the position of agriculture changed in the past 5, 10, 20 or more years? If so, how?
- What are the trends of the different agricultural enterprises in the county?
- What are the factors which contribute to the present trends in agriculture?
- What is the future of agriculture in the county?

A study of the area may point up the need for the county to join with adjacent counties in some programs that offer mutual opportunities. The study should include an examination of the population growth patterns and trends, particularly as they affect rural areas and agricultural lands. Attention also needs to be given to the various agricultural pro-

grams administered by the USDA agencies in the county. If the study is thorough, it will point up the opportunities for improving agriculture as well as identify the problems and limitations affecting farmers and ranchers.

Commerce and Industry. A review of the commercial and industrial enterprises in the county is another means of identifying new opportunities. Local chambers of commerce or industrial development groups, where they exist, should give leadership to this phase of the study. Many rural counties do not have these organizations; others have the chambers but do not employ a professional manager. In such instances, a special committee appointed by the program building committee could ascertain the business and industry situation in the county.

Local Government. The extent to which public services meet the needs of local citizens is of interest to the leadership in any county. Information in this area would be especially useful in developing educational programs to inform the people about the judicial systems; the legal subdivisions of government and how each is constituted; building codes and zoning regulations; taxation information; opportunities for improving law enforcement; sewage disposal; water systems; civil defense; fire protection; or other public services.

Sources of Background Information

The Texas Agricultural Extension Service has developed a set of outlines and forms which suggest the kinds of information useful in analyzing the county situation. When these are used by county groups they should be supplemented and revised to meet the needs of the county.

The following are some general sources of useful information:

- Committee members and other local people
- Published statistical data, such as United States Census Reports on population, housing, agriculture and business; Texas Almanac; local marketing associations; county records; Texas Employment Commission labor reports; Sales Management Magazine's Survey of Buying Power; Bureau of Business Research, University of Texas; Consumer and Marketing Service; Statistical Reporting Service; Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Service; Texas Department of Health and Public Welfare; local chambers of commerce; and others
- Reports and records of program building subcommittees
- Local surveys and area studies encompassing the county

- Resource people, including Extension specialists and USDA agency personnel
- Community, business, professional, civic, commodity and general farm organizations
- Publications from the Extension Service, Experiment Station, USDA agencies and others.

Procedures for Collecting and Analyzing Background Information

The program building committee, either directly or through the executive committee, should agree on procedures by which all members of the county program building committee and the subcommittees will be involved in collecting and analyzing background information. This is usually accomplished by subcommittees assuming the responsibility in their area of assignment and by the appointment of study groups to collect and analyze background information in areas of concern for which there is not an appropriate subcommittee.

Subcommittees. Subcommittees have been highly successful in collecting and analyzing background information in their area of concern. Each subcommittee should seek the assistance of special resource people who can provide needed information and assist in its analysis. USDA agency personnel and other professional persons are typical of those who can make this kind of contribution. Since the subcommittee's assignment is to collect and analyze background information, it should seriously study its assignment and develop a working procedure. Generally, the group should follow the procedure outlined below, but actually the steps are not sequential; most of them will be occurring throughout the study.

- Focus attention on the known problems and concerns that exist in the subcommittee's area of study and collect related information. This kind of a beginning will lead the group to collect other information as it sees the need for it
- Look for important facts, conditions, major changes or significant trends that need to be considered by the subcommittee and brought to the attention of the program building committee
- Determine what factors are influencing or causing these conditions, trends or changes
- Constantly seek additional information that may shed light on the true situation in the county
- Identify other problems and opportunities which were not recognized in the beginning, and develop related information

- Compile a written statement of the findings which will point up new opportunities or major problems that need attention in the county program. This statement may be developed at intervals during the period in which the subcommittee is making its study. It is perhaps one of the most important tasks of the group; therefore, it is desirable for each subcommittee to have at least one member with writing ability

- Recommend long-range objectives directed towards taking advantage of the opportunities and solving the problems that were identified in the study

- Present the report, with an appropriate oral explanation, to the county program building committee. This report may be one final report or it may be made at intervals, depending on the procedure established by the program building committee.

Study Groups. Information of a general nature about the county is pertinent to the decisions made about the long-range county program. This kind of information usually is not collected and analyzed by subcommittees because they direct their efforts toward the program area for which they are assigned. Study groups are usually appointed or individual assignments made for collecting such information. When this approach is used, each member of the program building committee who is not a member of a subcommittee should be assigned to a study group so that all will participate. The number of study groups will vary from one county to another, but among those that may be needed are one for commerce and industry, one for the history of the county and one for population and labor force characteristics. Others may be needed to study areas of concern not covered by existing subcommittees. Each study group should seek the assistance of resource people who can provide needed information and assist in its analysis. A study group will need to go through the steps previously suggested under the subcommittee heading. After a study group has completed its assignment, it should be dissolved. Although the basic study is conducted through subcommittees and study groups, the program building committee has the job of coordinating the study and further analyzing the findings.

Determining Problems and Areas of Program Emphasis

The primary purpose of a study is to identify opportunities for the social and economic development of a county. During the course of study, major problems will become apparent to the program building committee and others involved in the study. A prob-

lem may be defined as any condition or specific situation that the people, after careful study, determine some action or change is needed to bring about an improvement. As the program building committee reviews subcommittee or study group reports, it will need to list the problems which emerge in the process. In counties where the facts point to extremely urgent situations or deep concerns, it is highly probable that two or more groups will identify some of the same major problems. It is this kind of evidence that is useful to the committee as it decides on the problem areas to receive high priority in the program.

In deciding on the broad areas of program emphasis and problems to receive attention in the county program, the committee should examine each problem in light of these questions:

- What is the situation that needs to be improved? Who are the people (one or more groups) affected?
- Are those who are affected by the problem interested in doing something about it? If not, why?
- Is it practical at this time to do something about it?
- Are the needed resources available?

Establishing Long-Range Objectives

After the problems, needs and interests of the people are identified, committees are in a position to agree on objectives to include in the program. People, both individually and in groups, respond best to specific objectives they believe achievable. Such objectives are essential if educational programs are to motivate people to action. An objective should define *what a particular group of people expects to accomplish in relation to a specific problem or need*. Objectives should begin by clearly identifying the *target audience; then a positive statement of what they are to accomplish should follow*. Such objectives will serve a threefold purpose: they will (1) be a guide for planning educational and action programs, (2) give direction to those responsible for carrying out the plans and (3) provide the basis for measuring program accomplishments.

Some problems are so broad that they may require more than one objective, simply because different groups of people may be affected by the problem in different ways. Therefore, solving a problem may require a variety of actions by different groups and in-

dividuals. The objectives will be more meaningful if expressed in such a way that they will identify a specific group of people with the problem on which the objective is based.

After objectives are agreed on, the committee should study them and list possible alternatives for reaching each objective. The listing of such alternatives is nothing more than suggesting some possible solutions to the problem. If this is done for each objective, the committee will be prepared to establish realistic priorities for implementing the program.

Establishing Priorities and Plans for Program Execution

Priorities and specific suggestions for program implementation are essential for good planning. Such priorities are actually the decisions the committee makes about the order and urgency with which various problems and objectives are to receive attention. It makes these decisions after considering all the possible alternatives for activating the program. Agreements are reached about the roles that subcommittees, local organizations and agencies will have in working toward certain objectives. In reaching such agreements, the committee must recognize that a definite sequence of events may be necessary for the attainment of a given objective. In determining priorities the committee and subcommittees should

- Point up any specific objective which deserves top priority and the immediate attention of one or more subcommittees or other groups
- Identify objectives to receive high priority within each program area.

In determining how the program will be implemented, the program building committee should enlist the support of agencies and local groups that have the needed resources to work with the committee to plan and conduct action programs for each objective. In this respect the committee may

- Select appropriate objectives for which it will assume responsibility for initiating an action program
- Assign specific objectives or phases of the program to subcommittees for more detailed planning and action
- Appoint additional subcommittees if and when needed
- Enlist the active support of other groups, USDA agencies and other resource people in carrying out plans for which they have special competencies.

Providing for Evaluation and Revision of the Program

The final step in planning a long-range county program is that of providing for evaluation and revision of the program. As the committee becomes involved in carrying out the program, progress will be made, conditions will change and, possibly, deficiencies in the plans will be recognized. Useful evaluation of a county program is dependent on the appraisal of each related meeting, demonstration and other activity or event. Therefore, each subcommittee and other group involved in program implementation should be encouraged to evaluate continuously and report on its own work. With the information gained through this evaluation at the teaching level, the committee will be in a position to measure the accomplishments made in reaching long-range objectives over a period of time. Such evaluation should be used as a basis for making needed revisions in the written program. In deciding what will be done about evaluation and revision, the following suggestions may be helpful.

Evaluation

Continuous evaluation is essential if the program is to be kept up to date. Evaluation cannot be an afterthought. It must be planned in advance. The following should be considered:

Evaluate the planning activities. The value of the county program will depend on the amount and quality of work that has gone into the planning process.

Evaluate results. The ultimate measure of success of the county program is determined by the degree to which each long-range objective is reached. Since the objectives are directed toward solving the prob-

lems identified by the people, this kind of evaluation of accomplishments must begin with the actual educational activities conducted in the county. It should determine the degree to which the various demonstrations and activities which were planned at the beginning of the year were actually carried out. It should also reflect the degree to which the target audience made the desired changes.

Evaluate teaching methods. This evaluation should determine the degree to which each demonstration or activity actually told the intended story. Was it well planned? Was failure experienced? If so, what are the explanations for the failures? It should reveal how well the demonstrations or activities created interest and "captured the imagination" of the target audience or motivated them to action. It should measure the participation in each activity. This gives an exposure index although it does not necessarily indicate the specific learning that took place.

Review of Findings

At a meeting each year, the program building committee should review results and changes in the county situation. Subcommittees should be given an opportunity to report their activities and make suggestions for needed program adjustments. Sharing this knowledge of progress and results will strengthen and stimulate the work of the program building committee.

Program Revisions

Revisions of the program should be made at any time such need is recognized. However, the county program building committee should meet annually to review the county program and make needed revisions in objectives and priorities and supplement the program as needed. This will be useful to agents and subcommittees as they develop annual plans.

The Written County Program

When the county program building committee has completed the planning process described on pages 18-23, the county program should be written. The resulting program should be the "master plan" and point the direction of the educational program over a period of several years. It is not expected that Extension personnel involve themselves in implementing every facet of the long-range county program. The Extension Service will be concerned primarily with the educational phases of the county program for which it has resources and staff competencies. (See page 6)

The following outline should be useful to agents and others who help write the county program. The outline is flexible and the content under each section will vary from county to county. Six major sections are suggested:

- Introduction
- County situation
- Areas of program emphasis and major problems
- Long-range objectives, priorities and plans for program execution
- Provision for evaluation and revision
- Appendix.

In assembling the program, a table of contents showing page numbers should be included under the front cover. If statements of acknowledgment are included, they should also be placed at the front of the program.

The following gives an explanation of what information should be included under each section.

Introduction

The introduction should give the reader a clear description of the program building committee and the work that has been done in planning the county program. This description should include the following:

1. Statement explaining how and when the county program building committee was organized; also, an account of any subsequent reorganization or expansion of the committee
2. List of officers and other members of the executive committee

3. List of all members, showing where they live and the basis for their membership on the committee. For instance, some members will represent organizations in the county; others will represent commodity or special interest groups; some will represent communities or other geographic areas; and others may be leaders with influence among several groups and organizations

4. List of subcommittees with a statement about the responsibility of each subcommittee. Also, a list of the members of each subcommittee and an indication of the interest or occupation and place of residence for each member

5. List giving each USDA agency and its representative and other resource people who assisted the program building committee in planning the program

6. List of county Extension agents who assisted the program building committee in planning the program

7. Statement that indicates the procedure followed by the program building committee in planning the long-range county program. This would include an explanation of the process through which background information was collected and analyzed

8. Any other information that will give the reader a better understanding of the program building organization and the county program.

County Situation

This section of the county program should present a clear, concise description of the county situation. The major points listed on pages 18-20 provide a good outline for organizing the information to be included in the county situation section. Major items of information which the program building committee *considered* as a basis for making program decisions or which will be useful in carrying out the program should be identified. Other information may be included to present a true picture of the county situation. The need to cover significant and relevant information while at the same time keeping it brief presents the writer with a challenge to combine and summarize information without omitting essential facts. Also, because of the necessary length of this section, it is important that the information be presented in an interesting, easy-to-read form. A variety

of tables, charts, maps, pictures and graphs helps to summarize information, make comparisons, bring out changes and trends and make projections.

Areas of Program Emphasis and Major Problems

This section should name the program areas to receive emphasis and point up some of the more important problems, opportunities or needs for each area. The problems, needs or opportunities listed or discussed for a given program area should be plainly identified with the program area. (See discussion on pages 21 and 22.)

In listing the problems or developing problem statements for each program area, sufficient statistics and other facts should be included to indicate the magnitude of each problem and to identify the people affected. These statements should incorporate relevant information included in the county situation section.

Long-Range Objectives, Priorities and Plans for Program Execution

This section should contain a list of the long-range objectives for each program area agreed on by the program building committee. It should also indicate priorities for each program area and the plans that were made for carrying out the program.

This should be done in a clear, concise manner. For each objective in the program, the subcommittees and other groups having major roles in reaching the objective should be indicated. (See discussion on page 22.)

Provision for Evaluation and Revision

This section should reveal what will be done about evaluating accomplishments and revising the program. It will, in effect, be a statement of the program building committee's intentions with regard to evaluation and revision. It should describe, in as much detail as practical, when and how the program is to be evaluated and how needed revisions are to be made. (See page 23 for ideas useful in writing this section.)

Appendix

Materials which add to the value of the program but which may not logically be included in either of the other sections should be placed in the appendix. This should include information about the federal, state and local agencies and organizations that are available to help carry out the county program and a list of references used in obtaining data. It may also include the program building committee's standing rules or bylaws and any other items the committee wishes to include.

Leadership Of The County Program Building Organization In Carrying Out The County Program

The program building organization has the responsibility for working with the Extension agents to carry out the county program. To meet this responsibility, it should involve as many people as possible in working toward the program objectives. To accomplish this, each part of the organization has an important role.

The County Program Building Committee or Executive Committee

The county program building committee, either directly or through the executive committee, is responsible for coordinating and giving leadership for carrying out the county program. The committee should interpret the program to the people, stimulate action and make systematic evaluation of the progress. Each of these points is discussed in the following paragraphs.

Interpreting the Program to the People

If people are to be involved in the program, they must be familiar with its purposes and objectives. Therefore, the committee should develop and follow a plan for creating public awareness of the program. Such an effort will do much to increase the ultimate program accomplishments. In planning for program interpretation, the committee should consider who will assume responsibility for interpretation, people to be reached, kind of interpretation to be given and methods to be used.

Responsibility for Interpretation

The committee should provide the leadership for interpreting the program to the people. As soon as the written program is completed and adopted by the committee, it should be reproduced for wide distribution. It is advisable for the committee to have one or more meetings to review the program and plan for presenting and interpreting it to individuals and groups. The Extension agents can make a valuable contribution in developing these plans.

Individual committee members who are to perform specific jobs in interpreting the program to the public should be prepared for this work by the executive committee and the Extension agents.

People To Be Reached

Although the general public needs to be informed about the county program, it is especially important to reach all individuals and groups whose support is needed and who are to become involved in some phase of the program. Subcommittees, through their representative on the program building committee, should be kept informed at all times about the program. Other groups to be reached include representatives of press, radio and television serving the county, commissioners court, city governing bodies, members of Congress and the State Legislature who represent the county, representatives of USDA agencies, general farm organizations, commodity groups, service clubs, home demonstration and other women's clubs, community organizations, youth groups, chambers of commerce, parent-teacher associations and others that may have a special interest in the program.

Kind of Interpretation

Different groups will be interested in the program in different ways, but all groups and organizations should understand the general purpose of the county program, how it was developed and by whom. There should be a summary analysis of the county situation, pointing out opportunities for progress and problems that must be overcome. The long-range objectives should be reviewed and an explanation made as to why each objective was included. In discussing the program with various groups, an attempt should be made to point out the implications of specific objectives to certain groups with appropriate suggestions as to how these groups might support the program.

Methods To Be Used

One method of interpreting the program is through distribution of the written county program. A special effort should be made to place a copy in the

hands of those who are in positions of leadership. This would include the individuals and heads of organizations named above. As each of these leaders is given a copy of the program, some member of the committee should review it and make needed interpretation.

A second method of interpreting the program is for members of the committee to meet with each organization that has purposes related to those of the program building committee. At these meetings the committee member could discuss the county program as suggested under the heading, "Kind of Interpretation" on page 26. This method would reach the majority of the people who belong to organizations in the county. Every available channel of mass communication, such as press, radio and television, can help interpret the program to the general public. Exhibits, posters, circular letters or other appropriate means are also helpful.

Stimulating Action on the Written County Program

Program implementation is the responsibility of the program building committee, either directly or through the executive committee. Although many other groups should be involved, this overall responsibility should be assumed by the committee itself. The committee should develop an action plan for implementing the county program and contact the appropriate groups and individuals that can take action. This can be accomplished by the following:

- Liaison and clear communication between the program building committee, all subcommittees, organizations and groups represented on the committee
- Conferences between leaders of the committee and officers of local groups to identify ways these groups can be involved
- The committee's taking the initiative to see that agency representatives and other resource people are given an opportunity to help develop detailed plans for reaching objectives which require their participation and support
- The committee's giving assistance and support to local organizations and groups who contribute to achieving the program objectives.
- Recognizing organizations, agencies and other groups which have made accomplishments in support of program objectives.

The committee should assume responsibility for actually carrying out certain phases of the program. It may choose to work on one or more objectives

of general interest and importance in the county and for which no other group or agency is organized to do the job. For example, the committee might assume responsibility for leadership development activities, community improvement programs or others of this type.

Systematic Evaluation of the Program Building Committee's Work

The program building committee, either directly or through the executive committee, should provide the leadership for evaluation of program action. This evaluation needs to be continuous and should begin as soon as action has begun on any part of the program.

The committee should determine how well the county program is understood and supported by the people. Evaluation of this kind should follow the committee's work of interpreting the program to the people of the county. In this respect the committee will need to determine these factors:

- The degree to which all interested groups were actually contacted
- The reactions of various groups toward the county program.

The committee should evaluate its own leadership in getting the program implemented. In making this kind of evaluation it will need to determine the following:

- If copies or summaries of the county program were provided for appropriate groups and individuals
- If the committee gave appropriate assistance to subcommittees or other groups that assumed responsibilities for implementing the program
- The extent that agencies, organizations and groups have been involved
- How well subcommittees and other groups accepted and met their program responsibilities
- How successful the committee itself has been in carrying out those phases of the program for which it was responsible.

Subcommittees

The degree of success in achieving program objectives, in a large measure, depends on the subcommittees' accepting and meeting their responsibilities in carrying out the program. Close liaison and two-way communication should be maintained

between the subcommittees and other parts of the program building organization at all times. This will enable the subcommittees to develop detailed plans for implementing programs to reach objectives for which they have a responsibility.

The various subject-matter guides that are available from Extension Service specialists will be valuable to subcommittees as they plan and carry on their work.

As indicated below, subcommittees are responsible for planning, putting their plans into action, evaluating results and reporting accomplishments.

Planning For Program Action

Subcommittees should perform a number of planning functions. These include the following:

- Review the county program to become familiar with the major problems and the long-range objectives with which they are concerned
- Identify any problems and objectives on which a subcommittee may need to work jointly with other committees or groups in the county
- Study each major problem on which the subcommittee will work and gather additional background information if it is needed to provide a better understanding of all aspects of the problem
- Give close attention to the priorities that have been set by the county program building committee and which affect the work of the subcommittee
- Identify all available resources that can make a contribution to the effectiveness of the program
- Establish annual goals and develop a plan of action to reach the goals. These plans will be useful to the Extension Service and other agencies as they make their own annual plans of work (Refer to The County Extension Agents' Annual Plan of Work on page 29.)
- Give the county program building committee or executive committee an opportunity to suggest appropriate coordination with other subcommittees.

Carrying Out the Action Plans

Subcommittees that set goals and make plans of action to reach these goals have both a responsibility and an opportunity for helping implement the plans they make. Most major activities are planned prior to the beginning of a new year's work. For such early planning to be developed into an action program the subcommittee should do the following:

- Make additional plans prior to each event. Agreement should be reached about specific jobs to be done and the committee members responsible for each job

- Obtain the assistance of needed resource people and involve appropriate action groups

- Follow through on the detailed plans. This means that certain members may be responsible for arranging the meeting place or other physical facilities; others may be in charge of attendance and registration; others may make the contacts to arrange needed financial sponsorship; another may preside during the meeting; and perhaps still others will be carrying out other equally important responsibilities.

The subcommittee that recognizes its opportunities and follows through by putting plans into action makes a significant contribution to the success of the county program.

Evaluating and Reporting Accomplishments

Each subcommittee should continuously examine its work in an effort to find ways to increase effectiveness. This evaluation should consider these factors:

- The subcommittee as an organization. Are the members individually accepting responsibilities and working together as a group? Is the subcommittee seeking and getting cooperation and support from other organizations and resource people? Is it coordinating its work with the county program building committee, other subcommittees and other organizations that have mutual interests?
- Adequacy of subcommittee planning. Plans should be re-examined at intervals. If ways of strengthening plans are found, the plans should be revised accordingly.
- The way the subcommittee is working in implementing its plans. Are all committee members actively participating? Are all available resources being utilized? Are a variety of techniques being used in carrying out the plans? Answers to these questions will give the subcommittee information as a basis for making necessary changes.
- Accomplishments from the subcommittee's work. This is the end product toward which all planning has been directed. Accomplishments can best be measured in terms of who was reached and the degree to which desired changes were made. Comparison of these results with the annual goal will indicate how successful the work has been.

Program accomplishments should be reported frequently and systematically through a variety of media. Progress reports through the local press,

radio, television and other means will help the people learn of results. In turn, this will help bring about additional participation and support of the work.

The County Extension Agent's Annual Plan Of Work

The Extension Service, like any other agency or group concerned with the county program, should make plans for carrying out its program responsibilities. The annual plan of work prepared by county Extension agents serves that purpose. This plan of work spells out responsibilities and tasks of Extension agents, most of which are directly related to the county program. Other tasks not directly related to the program are also included.

Although annual plans of work are made by the agents, the actual planning on which they are based involves the program building committee, appropriate subcommittees, specialists and other resource people and groups that will have a part in carrying out the plans.

If the plan is to serve its purpose as a guide to action it must be developed in as much detail as is practical. A good annual plan of work will

- Establish annual goals based on the objectives designated for Extension work during the coming year
- Identify the specific people to be reached
- Define the subject matter to be covered
- State the methods to be used and events planned for reaching each target audience
- Designate who will do the teaching or be responsible for each event
- Show, insofar as possible, when and where each activity or event will take place

- State what part of the work is to be evaluated and describe the evaluation methods.

Well made plans which include the details previously suggested will serve several purposes:

1. Members of the county Extension staff will be able to do a better job of coordinating their own activities and efforts. They will be guided by a single plan which takes into consideration the talents and abilities of each agent.
2. The annual plan of work will help agents develop a calendar of events to guide their activities from day to day.
3. The annual plan of work helps maintain continuity of Extension work in the county when a change of agents occurs.
4. It will help district agents schedule specialists to assist in carrying out the plans. Valid plans will provide a basis for coordinating the several specialists requested for a single county, as well as for joint planning for two or more counties.
5. County plans of work guide specialists in developing specific subject matter, training materials, teaching aids and other resources needed to support county programs.
6. Finally, the annual plan of work provides Extension agents an opportunity year by year to review the objectives in the county program, evaluate progress, establish new goals and make new plans for reaching them.

The value of this handbook depends on its being a useful guide and a dependable reference for Extension personnel as they work with program building committees in the development of county programs. The recommendations contained herein are based on sound principles developed through research, experience and the combined knowledge of all who have had a part in planning, writing and revising the handbook. Additional research in program building and experience of agents and committees will offer opportunities for revising or supplementing the handbook in the future. Suggestions from those who use this information are solicited by the authors.

Appendix

Standing Rules for County Program Building Committees

The purpose of this appendix is to help county program building committees formulate and write their standing rules. It is important that committee members understand the purposes and plans of the program building committee before they begin writing standing rules. No organization should "borrow" standing rules from another and expect them to be useful under a different set of conditions.

Members of the committee need to agree on the rules by which they will operate. The rules should be written specifically for the committee in a simple, understandable form. It is recommended that the committee operate for a period of time before making a final agreement on the rules. Experience in dealing with situations as they arise will enable the committee to arrive at the best rules under which it can achieve the purposes of the organization.

In the beginning, the committee may make temporary provisions for its operating procedures. These provisions should be recorded in the official minutes. When the standing rules are finally written, consideration should be given to the provisional rules.

The task of drafting the standing rules should be assigned to one person or a small committee of members who understand program building. A consultant, such as a local attorney or a well-versed parliamentarian, may be asked to assist the committee. Sufficient time should be allowed for the group to weigh each issue and to make a thorough study. When the proposed rules are presented for discussion by the program building committee, a copy should be provided each member.

The number and character of the standing rules will vary, but the subjects listed below are usually included:

1. Name
2. Purpose
3. Membership
4. Officers
5. Executive committee
6. Subcommittees
7. Meetings
8. Finances

9. Voting body
10. Quorum
11. Amendments

The following examples may be helpful to committees as they write their standing rules. Alternative examples are given for membership, executive committee and meetings to indicate how these articles may be handled when the executive committee provides coordination and overall leadership.

1. Name

The name of this organization is the County Program Building Committee.

2. Purpose

The purpose of the County Program Building Committee is to involve the people of the county in the solution of problems that are important to them. Although the committee may concern itself with any problem that is important to the people, the committee shall not duplicate the efforts of other organizations in the county. It shall be the policy of the committee to cooperate with and assist other organizations where the committee's assistance is needed and requested.

3. Membership

The membership of the County Program Building Committee shall consist of its officers, subcommittee chairmen and other individuals needed to provide representation of the important social and economic interests that are relevant to the purposes of the committee, as well as major geographic areas of the county.

a. The number of members shall be determined by the executive committee.

b. Term of office for each member shall be two years with half of the members' terms of office expiring each year. The term of office shall begin on the first day of the month following a member's selection to office except in the case of interim selections to fill vacancies. In such case, the new member shall serve the unexpired term of office beginning as soon as he is selected.

c. Members of the committee shall be appointed and their acceptance obtained by the executive committee. Such selections shall be made prior to the annual meeting. In selecting program building committee members to replace those whose terms have expired, the executive committee shall consider some of the out-going members for an additional term of office so that not over one fourth of the total membership will be new on the committee.

OR

(when executive committee coordinates and provides leadership for the county program)

The membership of the County Program Building Committee shall consist of its officers, executive committee and the total membership of all subcommittees.

4. Officers

The officers of the committee shall be chairman, vice chairman and secretary-treasurer.

a. The duties of the officers shall be those pertaining to their offices and other duties assigned them by the executive committee.

b. Officers shall be elected from the current membership of the county program building committee.

c. Officers shall be elected on alternate years at the county program building committee's annual meeting.

d. Officers shall be elected for a 2-year term and shall take office immediately following their election.

e. No person shall be elected to the same office for more than two consecutive terms.

f. At a meeting preceding the annual meeting at which officers are to be elected, the executive committee shall select a nominating committee of three persons. The nominating committee shall nominate one person for each of the offices of chairman, vice chairman and secretary-treasurer and one person for each additional position on the executive committee, except those positions that are automatically filled by subcommittee chairmen. The nominating committee shall ascertain that those placed in nomination will serve if elected.

At the annual committee meeting at which officers are to be elected, the nominating committee shall submit its nominees for vote. Additional nominations for each office may be made from the floor.

Officers and executive committee members shall be elected by the membership by ballot. The person receiving a majority of votes cast at the annual meeting, at which a quorum is present, shall be elected to each office.

When a vacancy in the chairmanship occurs, the vice chairman automatically assumes the position of chairman. Other vacancies in office shall be filled

by the executive committee from the membership of the program building committee.

5. Executive Committee

The executive committee shall consist of five members, three officers and two additional members.

a. The two additional members of the committee shall be elected at the same time and in the same way the officers are elected. They shall take office immediately following their election.

b. Executive committee members shall serve a 2-year term. They shall not be elected to the same position on the committee for more than two consecutive terms.

c. The officers of the county program building committee shall serve in the same positions on the executive committee.

d. The executive committee shall hold regular meetings in January and September of each year and at other times as determined by the chairman. The secretary shall notify members of the meetings.

e. A quorum shall consist of four members. A majority vote of the members present at a meeting where a quorum is present shall be the act of the committee.

f. The executive committee is empowered to act, as authorized in rules 3, 4, 5 and 6, to transact necessary business between the meetings of the county program building committee and to act in emergencies that do not affect the policies of the county program building committee.

OR

(when executive committee coordinates and provides leadership for the county program)

The executive committee shall consist of a minimum of 12 members; three officers, the chairman of each subcommittee and at least four additional members.

a. Executive committee members who are not officers or subcommittee chairmen shall be elected at the same time and in the same way the officers are elected.

b. Term of office for executive committee members who do not also serve as officers or subcommittee chairman shall be two years.

c. Officers of the county program building committee shall serve in the same positions on the executive committee.

d. All subcommittee chairmen shall serve as members of the executive committee during their tenure as subcommittee chairmen.

e. The executive committee shall hold regular meetings in January, May and September of each year and at other times as determined by the chairman. The secretary shall notify members of the meetings.

f. A quorum shall consist of 50 percent of the members. A majority vote of the members present at a meeting where a quorum is present shall be the act of the committee.

g. The executive committee is empowered to act, as authorized in rules 3, 4, 5, 6, and 7. In addition the executive committee shall carry out those functions it deems necessary to its responsibility for coordinating and providing over-all leadership for planning, carrying out and evaluating the county educational program.

6. Subcommittees

The executive committee shall determine the subcommittees of the County Program Building Committee. The executive committee may dissolve subcommittees and create new ones.

a. Chairman—The chairman of each subcommittee shall be appointed by the chairman of the county program building committee after he has been approved by the executive committee. The chairman shall appoint the subcommittee chairman as soon as practical after he is elected. Upon appointment, the chairmen of the subcommittees shall become members of the county program building committee.

b. Secretary—The subcommittee shall elect one member as secretary.

c. Members of Subcommittees—Members of subcommittees shall be appointed by the chairman of the county program building committee after he has consulted with and had recommendations from the chairman of each subcommittee. The chairman shall appoint the subcommittee members as soon as practical after he is elected.

d. Term of Office—The term of office of the chairmen and other members of subcommittees shall be the same as that of the chairman of the county program building committee.

e. Meetings—Subcommittee shall meet at such times and places as determined by the subcommittee chairman.

f. Reports—Reports of subcommittee plans shall be made to the county committee. Each subcommittee shall make a summary report of its activities to the county committee at its annual meeting. The chairman shall make the report and submit a copy to the chairman of the county program building committee.

g. Vacancies—A vacancy in the office of a subcommittee chairman shall be filled by an appointee of the program building committee chairman subject to the approval of the executive committee. Other vacancies in the subcommittee shall be filled by persons appointed by the chairman after he has consulted with the chairman of the subcommittee.

7. Meetings

The County Program Building Committee shall hold regular meetings during February and October, and at other times determined by the chairman.

a. The February meeting shall be the annual meeting when reports of accomplishments are made. On alternate years officers are to be elected.

b. The chairman shall designate the place and hour of each meeting.

c. The secretary shall send notice of each meeting to the members at least 1 week prior to the meeting date.

OR

(when executive committee coordinates and provides leadership for the county program)

The County Program Building Committee shall meet during February of each year and at other times determined by the executive committee.

a. The February meeting shall be the annual meeting when reports of accomplishments are made. On alternate years, officers shall be elected.

b. The chairman shall designate the place and hour of each meeting.

c. The secretary shall send notice of each meeting to the members at least 1 week prior to the meeting.

8. Finances

a. No membership dues shall be required.

b. The secretary-treasurer shall receive, hold and disburse all funds belonging to the County Program Building Committee and make a full report as requested by the chairman.

c. All disbursements shall be made by checks signed by both the committee chairman and the secretary-treasurer.

d. At the end of the term of office, the secretary-treasurer shall turn over to the secretary-treasurer-elect all money, books and papers of the county committee in the custody of the secretary-treasurer.

9. Voting Body

The voting body shall consist of the members as defined in Rule 3.

10. Quorum

A quorum shall consist of half of the members of the committee.

11. Amendments

These rules may be amended by a two-thirds majority vote of the members present and constituting a quorum at a meeting of the organization at which the proposed amendment is to be acted on. At least two weeks before the meeting, the secretary shall send a notice of the meeting and include a copy of the proposed amendment.